

Box AF
Assistant Commissioner
for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

**AMENDMENT AND REQUEST FOR
RECONSIDERATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.116**

Dear Sir:

In response to the August 27, 2002 Official Action (Paper No. 12), please amend the above-identified patent application as follows:

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 5 and 15 as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A method for determining the presence or absence of a target nucleic acid sequence in a sample nucleic acid, the method comprising:
 - (a) exposing the sample to a detection agent comprising at least two separate components, including a first agent having a metal surface associated with a first target binding species (TBS) and a second agent having a metal surface associated with a second TBS, different from said first TBS, at least one of said metal surfaces being associated with a SER(R)S-active species (SAS), each of said first and second TBS being effective to bind to the target sequence, and wherein the binding of the first and second TBS to the target